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Benjamin Silliman [New Haven, CT] to Jacob Berzelius [Stockholm, Sweden] regarding: W. Beaumont's copy of thanks for volumes of Berzelius' Chemistry and request for analysis of the samples of gastric juice sent by Beaumont to Berzelius. April 10, 1833

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Copy

Yale College New Haven.

April 10. 1833

B. 1

Dear Sir -

I had the honour to write to you on the 5<sup>th</sup> of Dec<sup>r</sup> to thank you for the five first Volumes of your Chemistry. I have now the pleasure to thank you for the 6<sup>th</sup> Vol. which arrived some weeks since.

My more immediate object however, is to invite your attention to a subject which I trust you will think to possess no common interest. It is nothing less than the Gastric fluid, obtained in quantity, & apparently in purity from a healthy man, who more than ten years ago, by the accidental discharge of a musket, obtained an artificial orifice to his Stomach, which remains open & admits of the introduction of a tube of caoutchouc, by which early in the morning the gastric fluid is extracted.

A sufficient quantity of it for analysis, will, at my request, be transmitted to you by Dr Beaumont, an Assistant Surgeon of the American Army, who took charge of the wounded man - effected his cure & has ever since kept him in his military family / for ten years / & has carefully observed the phenomena of this extraordinary case. Dr Beaumont, now resident at No 110 Broadway N.Y. will transmit to you a more particular statement of the case. You may implicitly rely upon his statement - only our fact need be mentioned to prove that the fluid obtained from this man's stomach, is really the long sought gastric



gastrie fluid - namely, that when animal muscles, farinaceous matter & any article of food whatever are immersed in it, it performs the process of digestion while this fluid is, by itself impetresible & undergoes no change by keeping some months & perhaps longer - There are many very curious circumstances connected with this case & the most important, I trust Dr Beaumont will communicate to you when he transmits the fluid through your worthy consent Mr Galen of New York.

My motive for troubling you with this affair, is that I am anxious that a subject of such deep interest to mankind should be investigated by (pardon me for saying) the man of all others, best qualified for the task - I should be very desirous that Dr Beaumont or myself might receive the result as soon as convenient -

In the mean time, I shall make a few tentative experiments, but I cannot flatter myself that I shall discover the peculiar agent, which <sup>works</sup> such wonders in the animal system -

Hoping that your health is good & wishing you every blessing - I remain, Dr Sir,

Most respectfully & truly yours

1 Signed, J. B. Silliman

Prof. <sup>Joseph</sup> Barzilius -  
Stockholm - Sweden -